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Central:	Trust-wide, applicable at trust and school levels. Schools may not make any changes or adaptations

Volunteer Policy

St Christopher's, Cowley

Approved by:	**Education Quality Standards & Safeguarding Impact**
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1. Introduction and aims

ODST believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work, and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the school's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the ODST volunteer guidance is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents with clear expectations and guidelines
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers
- This guidance has been developed in line with the statutory safeguarding policy Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) from the Department for Education (DfE).

2. How we use volunteers

Within ODST, school volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the local governing body
- Parents or Carers
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA
- Local clergy or members of the congregation

Members of the local governing body (LGB) working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this guidance. They are covered by our LGB code of conduct.

3. How to apply to volunteer

Potential volunteers may contact the school:

- By emailing the school office
- Approaching senior leaders, class teachers or heads of department
- Completing an application form (see appendix 1)

4. Appointment of volunteers

Volunteers are appointed by the school's Headteacher.

Appointment and induction of new volunteers can take up to 6 weeks, and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school.

All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.

The headteacher reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

Enhanced DBS checks for volunteers working in the school through other organisations will be conducted by the relevant organisation, if needed. The school will ask for written confirmation that enhanced DBS checks have been carried out before a volunteer is allowed to start work at the school.

5. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, and our volunteers must share our commitment to child protection.

To ensure we're upholding our responsibility to keep our pupils safe, we will:

- Undertake appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks for all volunteers.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for any volunteer who is undertaking regulated activity.
- Recognise that, from 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption no longer applies when determining whether a volunteer is undertaking regulated activity. Volunteers may be undertaking regulated activity even when supervised by a member of staff.
- Regard a volunteer as undertaking regulated activity where they:
    - Teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children on more than 3 days in a 30-day period; and/or
    - Undertake such activities overnight between 2am and 6am, including as part of a residential educational visit.
    - For the purposes of determining regulated activity, schools should consider all volunteering undertaken by the individual. Where a volunteer works across more than one school or setting, the cumulative number of days may be relevant when assessing whether regulated activity is taking place.
- Ensure that volunteers undertaking regulated activity do not commence their role until all required checks have been completed.
- Consider the results of any DBS check that reveals criminal information on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the nature of the information disclosed and the role to be undertaken.
- Obtain written confirmation of appropriate safeguarding checks from any third-party organisation providing volunteers to the school.
- Ensure that volunteers who are not undertaking regulated activity are subject to appropriate supervision and risk assessment arrangements.
- Provide safeguarding training to all volunteers before they begin work within the school.
- Ensure volunteers who engage in regular work with pupils complete Level 2 safeguarding training, either through the Local Authority, ODST, or the school, in line with Trust expectations.
- Ensure volunteers have read and understood the safeguarding information required by the school, including relevant sections of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and are aware of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Require volunteers to read and comply with:
    - The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
    - The Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct
    - Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies
    - The Behaviour Policy
    - Any other policies deemed relevant to their role
- Ensure volunteers understand that safeguarding concerns may arise both online and offline, including concerns relating to child-on-child abuse, cyberbullying, grooming, the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, online exploitation, and the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. Any concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Maintain appropriate records of volunteer recruitment, vetting, training and risk assessments in accordance with safer recruitment requirements.
- Record relevant volunteer safeguarding checks on the school's Single Central Record where required.
- Retain records for volunteers who engage in regular work with pupils, including:
    - Volunteer application form
    - References
    - Identity verification
    - DBS information where applicable
    - Risk assessments
    - Evidence of safeguarding training

- Where an existing volunteer becomes engaged in regulated activity because of the changes introduced from 1 September 2026, the school will obtain the required children's barred list information through an enhanced DBS check before the volunteer continues in that role. Schools cannot obtain a DBS certificate for volunteers under the age of 16. Appropriate supervision and risk assessment arrangements will be implemented for any child volunteering within the school.

6. Volunteers in EYFS Provision

Where volunteers work within Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision, the school will ensure that all suitability, safeguarding and vetting requirements are met in accordance with the EYFS Statutory Framework. Volunteers will be appropriately supervised at all times and will not be left alone with children unless the school has determined that all required checks have been completed and that it is appropriate for them to undertake their role without direct supervision. The school will ensure that volunteers are clear about their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

7. Induction and training

Volunteers must complete appropriate training prior to beginning work at the school.

Training requirements will be determined by the headteacher.

All volunteers must have safeguarding training. Other training requirements will be based on the nature of the work the volunteer will be doing.

8. Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.

If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with a senior leadership member of staff.

This doesn’t prevent volunteers from adhering to the school’s safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistle-blowing policy.

9. Conduct of volunteers

Volunteers must comply with the ODST staff code of conduct

10. Expenses

The school is not obligated to cover any expenses, but volunteers can request travel and material costs as previously agreed prior to starting volunteer work. If expenses are covered, the school should follow its usual expenses claim procedures.

11. Insurance

Check with your insurance provider before adapting this section. Your insurance provider may cover volunteers working in some roles but not others.

The school's insurance policy [does/doesn't] cover volunteers in the event of an accident or emergency.

If a volunteer is working at the school through another organisation, we will also check that organisation's insurance arrangements.

12. Data protection and record keeping

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it.

We will:

- Retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule
- Remove details of volunteers from the single central record (SCR) once they no longer work at our school
- For additional information, volunteers can refer to the school's privacy notice, available from the schools office.
- Maintain Single Central Record entries for volunteers where required by statutory guidance and local procedures. Records will include details of DBS and barred list checks, identity checks and any other safer recruitment checks undertaken.

13. Monitoring and review

This guidance has been approved by the LGB and will be reviewed regularly.

There's no required review cycle for volunteer policies but changes will be made in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, relevant legislation and DfE guidance.

14. Links to policies

This volunteering guidance is linked to our:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
- Staff code of conduct policy
- Behaviour policy
- Safer recruitment policy

Appendix 1: Volunteer application form

ODST Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust **Volunteer Application Form**				
Please ensure that you fill in all parts of the application form. Checks may be carried out to verify the information you provide on the application form. PLEASE COMPLETE USING BLACK INK OR TYPE				
Post applied for				
Please return to				
Personal Information				
Surname		Forenames		
Title	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Revd/Dr/Other			
Address				
Postcode				
Contact Details	Home			
	Work (if convenient)(			
	Mobile			
	E-mail			
National Insurance Number				
Previous Employment				
Please summarise your most recent employment and/or educational history over the past 2 years, starting with the most recent.				
Employer's name and address	From	To	Job title and summary of main duties	Reasons for leaving

Please use the space below to summarise your reasons for interest in the volunteer role and what attributes you could bring to it.

References			
We shall require a reference from your current employer, or most recent if not currently in employment. If this is not possible, a training provider or educational provider is appropriate. Lastly, a personal friend/contact can be named as a reference. Please note that, except in very unusual circumstances, any appointment we make will be conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory reference. It is our normal practice to request references.			
1st Employer		2nd Personal	
Name		Name	
Position		Position	
Address		Address	
Email		Email	
In what capacity does the above know you?		In what capacity does the above know you?	

Disclosure and Barring Checks	
The Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust is legally obligated to process a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts and any offer of employment is therefore conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory DBS check. The DBS check will reveal both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, and bind-overs as well as pending prosecutions, which aren't "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Where relevant we'll use the DBS check to ensure we comply with any appropriate Childcare Disqualification Regulations. Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and ODST's privacy statement. If you've lived or worked outside of the UK in the last 5 years, ODST may require additional information in order to comply with 'safer recruitment' requirements. If you answer 'yes' to the question below, we may contact you for additional information in due course.	
Have you lived or worked outside of the UK in the last 5 years?	Yes/No

If you have an existing DBS certificate that is portable, i.e. you have registered and paid for access to the DBS update service, please let us know.
Declaration
I agree that any offer of voluntary work with Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust is subject to satisfactory evidence of the references and a satisfactory enhanced DBS check. In accordance with the General Data Protection Act, it is agreed that Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust may hold and use personal information about me for personnel reasons and to enable the organisation to keep in touch with me. This information can be stored in both manual or computer form. Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust is committed to the prevention, detection and elimination or fraud and corruption. By signing this form, you acknowledge that your personal information will be data matched for these purposes in accordance with provisions made within the General Data Protection Act. I declare that the information given in this form and in any accompanying documentation is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and give my permission for enquiries to be made to confirm qualifications, experience, dates of employment and for the release by other people or organisations of necessary information to verify the content. I understand my application may be rejected and/ or I may be released following assignment if I have given any false or misleading information or have withheld any relevant details.

Signed	
Date	

Appendix 2: Volunteer Code of Conduct

ODST Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust GOVERNANCE

Volunteer Code of Conduct

By signing this form, volunteers agree to the following:

School policies

Volunteers will follow all school rules and policies, including those on:

- Safeguarding and Child protection
- ICT guidance and acceptable use of ICT
- Code of conduct
- Data protection
- Whistle-blowing

Copies of the school policies are available online or from the school office

Professional conduct

Volunteers must accept and follow instructions provided by supervisors, and ask for guidance or clarification if required. Questions can be directed to the headteacher.

Behaviour management is the responsibility of school staff. If volunteers witness behaviour that is in breach of the school's behaviour guidance, or are struggling to manage the behaviour of pupils with whom they're working, they should alert the class teacher immediately. Volunteers should not attempt to reprimand pupils or issue sanctions.

Volunteers must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes:

- Dressing in a way that is professional and appropriate to the work they are doing
- Refraining from using inappropriate language
- Setting an example for pupils by acting in a way that reflects the school's ethos and values
- Behaving in a way that is appropriate for the role they are undertaking
- Ensuring that comments, including those made on social media, do not bring the school into disrepute

Volunteers must not accept gifts from, or give gifts to, pupils. The exception is small tokens, such as those exchanged at the end of term or as a way of saying "thank you".

Volunteers should recognise that safeguarding concerns may arise online as well as in person. This includes concerns relating to online abuse, cyberbullying, grooming, child-on-child abuse, the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, online exploitation, and the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. Any concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Volunteers must not transport pupils in their own cars unless specific arrangements have been made with the school, and the pupil's parents have consented.

Parent volunteers with children at the school must not act in a way that favours their own child, and should not approach their child unnecessarily during the school day (for instance, during break times). They may not use their time as a volunteer to discuss their child's education with school staff.

If a volunteer is unable to come to school when they are expected/scheduled to be in, they must contact their supervisor or the school office as soon as possible. Inconsistent attendance may result in the placement being reviewed or terminated.

Safeguarding

Volunteers must be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's safeguarding and child protection guidance. Safeguarding training will be provided to all volunteers before they begin their placement.

If volunteers have concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL.

Volunteers should refrain from physical contact with pupils, and should use their judgement to determine when physical contact is appropriate. If physical contact with pupils is required, volunteers should ask for a pupil's consent before touching them.

Volunteers must inform the Headteacher immediately of any conviction, caution, investigation, court order, disqualification or other circumstance that may affect their suitability to work with children.

Volunteers must alert the DSL if a pupil develops an infatuation with them, and must not form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes:

- Exchanging contact information
- Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media
- Arranging to meet pupils outside of school
- Volunteers should not take or share photos of pupils unless instructed to do so by their supervisor.

Health and safety

Volunteers must abide by the school's health and safety and first aid policies. Volunteers are not to administer first aid, except in an emergency where none of the designated first aiders are available.
Volunteers must be familiar with the school's fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.
Volunteers must sign in and sign out at the beginning and end of every visit, and must wear a visitor badge at all times.

Confidentiality
Information about pupils, parents and staff at the school is confidential, and should not be shared with anyone else. Volunteers shouldn't discuss pupils with parents or other children. If parents approach volunteers for information, they should be directed to speak to a class teacher or the headteacher.

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in the termination of the placement. In more serious cases, misconduct will be treated in line with the school's staff disciplinary procedures.
Please sign and date below:

Volunteer Name (please print)	
Signed	
Date	

Appendix 3: Requesting a volunteer (information for staff)

If you'd like assistance from a volunteer in your classroom, or for a specific activity or trip, fill out the form below and submit to Mrs Hook.

You may want to provide more details about when staff should use this form. For instance, you may not need them to use it to request parent volunteers for school trips.

ODST Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust	**Volunteer Request Form**
Activity Details	
Year group/class	
Activity details	
Date(s) and time(s)	
Is this activity … (circle one)	One-off
	Daily
	Weekly
	Other, please explain
Will there be any costs for the volunteer (such as entry fees to museums, materials, or travel)?	
Volunteer details	
How many volunteers do you need?	
Do you need your volunteers to have any specific skills or experience?	
Submitted by	